

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claim Amendment Summary

Claims pending

- Before this Amendment: Claims 1-11, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 31, 32, 35-37 and 42-49.
- After this Amendment: Claims 1-5, 10-11, 17-18, 20, 31-32, 35-37, 42-43 and 46-49.

Canceled claims: Claims 6-9, 13-14 and 44-45.

Amended claims: Claims 1, 31, 32, 35-37, 42-43 and 46-47.

New claims: None.

Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

detecting a request for information (RFI) initiated by a client user while accessing a content item;

transmitting RFI data to a server on a broadcast network,

wherein the RFI data includes:

a time at which the RFI was initiated;

a channel accessed at the time the RFI was initiated; and

closed caption data associated with the content item occurring prior to and including the time at which the RFI was initiated; [[and]]

determining whether the content item is a program or an advertisement, wherein the determining comprises:

cross-referencing, at the server, a time at which the RFI was initiated with content item time code data to determine whether a program or an advertisement was scheduled at the time the RFI was initiated, wherein the content item time code data includes intra-program information relating to when advertisements are scheduled within the content item;

in response to no such content item time code data being available, using the closed caption data to derive search terms;

searching, at the server, a reference database using the search terms; and

determining from matches derived from the search whether the content item is a program or an advertisement;

in response to determining the content item is a program, associating a rule defined in a program rules module with the program, wherein the program rules module organizes a plurality of programs broadcast by the ~~network~~ server into a table, the table comprising:

a program identifier column identifying the program for which the client user entered a request for information;

an action column providing information on what type of content related to the identified program is provided to the client; [[and]]

a delivery mode column specifying a mode of delivery of the content related to the identified program to the client user; and

wherein the type of content provided in the action column and the mode of delivery specified in the deliver mode column further indicate a network entity other than the server, from amongst a plurality of different network entities, the network entity other than the server to deliver the content related to the identified program;

in response to determining the content item is an advertisement, associating a rule defined in an advertiser rules module with the advertisement, wherein the advertiser rules module organizes a plurality of advertisers whom sponsor advertisements broadcast by the ~~network~~ server into a table, the table comprising:

an advertiser identifier column identifying an advertiser sponsoring the advertisement for which the client user entered a request for information;

an action column providing information on what type of content related to the identified advertiser is to be provided to the client user; [[and]]

a delivery mode column specifying a mode of delivery of the content related to the identified advertiser to the client user; and

wherein the type of content provided in the action column and the mode of delivery specified in the deliver mode column further indicate another network entity other than the server, from amongst the plurality of different network entities, the another network entity other than the server to deliver the content related to the identified advertiser; and
executing a respective associated rule defined in the program rules module or the advertisers rule module.

2. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the closed caption data further comprises a predefined amount of closed caption data.

3. (Original) The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the amount of closed caption data further comprises a number of seconds of closed caption data.

4. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 3, wherein the number of seconds of closed caption data further comprises ten seconds or less.

5. (Original) The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the amount of closed caption data further comprises a number of bytes of closed caption data.

6-9. (Canceled)

10. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the request for information is initiated by a single button actuation.

11. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the content item is one of the following types of content item : video, audio, audio/visual, multimedia.

12-16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the reference database further comprises keywords, one or more keywords being associated with one or more content items.

18. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the reference database further comprises scripts of content items that can be compared with the search terms.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the program identifier further identifies a program title.

21. (Canceled)

22-30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently Amended) A ~~broadcast~~ network server, comprising:

electronic program guide data providing program information and scheduling information for a plurality of content items available on a broadcast network;

a response module configured to receive a request for information from a network client containing closed caption data associated with a selected content item accessed at the network client at a time when a client user entered a request for information;

a search module configured to perform a search using search terms derived from the closed caption data to determine a sponsor associated with the selected content item;

a program rules module configured to associate a rule with a program, wherein the program rules module:

contains at least a portion of a script of one or more content items available on the broadcast network; and

organizes a plurality of programs broadcast by the network server into a table, the table comprising:

a program identifier column identifying a program for which the client user entered a request for information;

an action column providing information on what type of content related to the identified program is provided to the client user; [[and]]

a delivery mode column specifying how to deliver the content related to the identified program to the client user; and

wherein the type of content provided in the action column and the mode of delivery specified in the deliver mode column further indicate a network entity other than the network server, from amongst a plurality of different network entities, the network entity other than the network server to deliver the content related to the identified program;

an advertiser rules module configured to associate a rule with an advertiser associated with the selected content item, wherein the advertiser rules module:

contains at least a portion of a script of one or more advertisements during broadcasts available on the broadcast network; and

organizes a plurality of advertisers whom sponsor advertisements broadcast by the network server into a table, the table comprising:

an advertiser identifier column identifying an advertiser for which the client user entered a request for information;

an action column providing information on what type of content related to the identified advertiser is provided to the client user; and

a delivery mode column specifying how to deliver the content related to the identified advertiser to the client user; and

wherein the type of content provided in the action column and the mode of delivery specified in the deliver mode column further indicate another network entity other than the network server, from amongst the plurality of different network entities, the another network entity other than the network server to deliver the content related to the identified advertiser; and

wherein the response module is further configured to perform acts comprising:

~~executing an action specified by one of the program rules module or the advertiser rules module;~~

determining whether the request for information was entered during a program or during an advertisement by cross-referencing the time at which the request for information was initiated with content item time code data to determine whether a program or an advertisement was scheduled at the time the request for information was initiated, wherein the content item time code data includes intra-program information relating to when advertisements are scheduled within the program;

in response to no such content item time code data being available, using the closed caption data to derive search terms;
searching a reference database using the search terms; [[and]]
determining from matches derived from the searching whether the content item is a program or an advertisement; and
executing a respective rule defined in the program rules module or the advertiser rules module.

32. (Currently Amended) The ~~broadcast~~ network server as recited in claim 31, wherein:

in an event it is determined that the content item is a program, the search module is further configured to search the program rules module; and

in an event it is determined that the content item is an advertisement, the search module is further configured to search the advertiser rules module.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Canceled)

35. (Currently Amended) The ~~broadcast~~ network server as recited in claim 31, further comprising a keywords module; and wherein

the search module is further configured to search the keywords module with the search terms derived from the closed caption data; and

the response module is further configured to determine whether the request for information was entered during a program or during an advertisement from search results.

36. (Currently Amended) The ~~broadcast~~ network server as recited in claim 31, wherein the action specified facilitates a plurality of actions comprising:

sending a system message;

sending an e-mail message; and

post mailing.

37. (Currently Amended) The ~~broadcast~~ network server as recited in claim 31, further comprising a client information module containing information about how to contact a subscriber associated with the network client; and wherein the action further comprises transmitting client information related to the network client from which the request for information was received to the sponsor of the program or advertisement.

38. (Canceled)

39. (Canceled)

40. (Canceled)

41. (Canceled)

42. (Currently Amended) One or more computer-readable media storing computer-executable instructions that, when executed on a computer, perform the following steps:

receiving a request for information data from a client connected to a broadcast network, the request for information data including:

closed caption data that is associated with a content item viewed at the client at the time a request for information was input by a user; and

a time stamp associated with the content item viewed at the client at the time a request for information was input by the user;

cross-referencing the time stamp at which the request for information was initiated with content item time code data stored on a server to determine whether a program or an advertisement was scheduled at the time the request for information was initiated, wherein the content item time code data includes intra-program information relating to when advertisements are scheduled within the program;

in an event no such content item time code data is available, analyzing the closed caption data to determine whether the request for information was input during a program or during an advertisement;

in response to determining the content item is a program, associating a rule defined in a program rules module with the program, wherein the program rules module organizes a plurality of programs broadcast by the ~~network~~ server into a table, the table comprising:

a program identifier column identifying the program for which the client user entered a request for information;

an action column providing information on what type of content related to the identified program is provided to the client user; [[and]]

a delivery mode column specifying a mode of delivery of the content related to the identified program to the client user; and

wherein the type of content provided in the action column and the mode of delivery specified in the deliver mode column further indicate a network entity other than the server, from amongst a plurality of different network entities, the network entity other than the server to deliver the content related to the identified program;

in response to determining the content item is an advertisement, associating a rule defined in an advertiser rules module with the advertisement, wherein the advertiser rules module organizes a plurality of advertisers whom sponsor advertisements broadcast by the ~~network~~ server into a table, the table comprising:

an advertiser identifier column identifying an advertiser sponsoring the advertisement for which the client user entered a request for information;

an action column providing information on what type of content related to the identified advertiser is to be provided to the client user; [[and]]

a delivery mode column specifying a mode of delivery of the content related to the identified advertiser to the client user; and

wherein the type of content provided in the action column and the mode of delivery specified in the deliver mode column further indicate another network entity other than the server, from amongst the plurality of different network entities, the another network entity other than the server to deliver the content related to the identified advertiser;

and

executing a respective associated rule defined in the program rules module or the advertisers rule module

~~determining an action to take in accordance with one of the rule defined in the program rules module or the rule defined in the advertiser rules module; and~~

~~performing the action.~~

43. (Currently Amended) The one or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 42, wherein the ~~performing the action~~ executing a respective associated rule further comprises sending user-identifying information to a sponsor associated with the content item so that the sponsor can provide information related to the content item to the user .

44-45. (Canceled)

46. (Currently Amended) The one or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 42, wherein the ~~performing the action~~ executing a respective associated rule further comprises sending an e-mail message to the user.

47. (Currently Amended) The one or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 42, wherein the ~~performing the action~~ executing a respective associated rule further comprises sending information via post to the user.

48. (Previously Presented) The one or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 42, wherein the analyzing the closed caption data to determine whether the request for information was input during a program or during an advertisement further comprises:

searching a plurality of keywords using search terms derived from the closed caption data; and

determining whether the request for information was input during a program or during an advertisement from matches generated by the search.

49. (Previously Presented) The one or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 42, wherein the analyzing the closed caption data to determine whether

the request for information was input during a program or during an advertisement further comprises:

searching text databases corresponding to a plurality of content items using search terms derived from the closed caption data; and

determining whether the request for information was input during a program or during an advertisement from matches generated by the search.

50-59. (Canceled)